Top Secret

[redacted]

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

Declassified and Approved for Release
by the Central Intelligence Agency
Date: 2001

The Sino-Soviet Relationship: The Military Aspects

[redacted]

Top Secret
NIE 11-13-73

20 September 1973

No. 186

THIS ESTIMATE IS SUBMITTED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AND CONCURRED IN BY THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD:

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense, the NSA, and the AEC.

Concurring:

The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State

The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

The Director, National Security Agency

The Assistant General Manager for National Security, Atomic Energy Commission

The Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury

Abstaining:

The Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, the subject being outside of his jurisdiction.

NIE 11-13-73

THE SINO-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP: THE MILITARY ASPECTS

CONTENTS

	Page
NOTE	1
PRÉCIS	2
THE ESTIMATE	5
I. THE MILITARY BUILDUP	5
II. THE LIKELIHOOD AND POSSIBLE FORMS OF MILITARY CONFLICT	9
III. FUTURE FORCE RELATIONSHIPS	12

THE SINO-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP: THE MILITARY ASPECTS[1]

NOTE

This Estimate focuses on the military aspects of the Sino-Soviet relationship. It assesses the policy decisions behind the buildup along the Sino-Soviet border, describes current capabilities for various types of military action, identifies and discusses various factors bearing on the chances of Sino-Soviet armed conflict, and arrives at an estimate of the likelihood of such conflict. More general aspects of the relationship and the possible alternative lines of development in the future will be presented in the forthcoming NIE 11/13/6-73, "Possible Changes in the Sino-Soviet Relationship."

PRÉCIS

The recent intensification in the exchange of recrimination, accusation, and insult between Moscow and Peking demonstrates the continuing tension and hostility in Sino-Soviet relations. A key question is whether this situation will persist, change toward a more controlled competition, or change toward the extremes of genuine rapprochement or war.

The chances are remote that the Chinese would deliberately take actions leading to war. There are, however, some considerations which argue for the possibility of a Soviet military initiative against China:

— The Soviet buildup in the vicinity of the border since 1965 exceeds by considerable measure the capability required to stop any attack the Chinese might mount, particularly since the bulk of Chinese forces in the border regions remain several hundred miles back from the frontier.

— Soviet strategic capabilities are overwhelming and a disarming strike against the still infant Chinese strategic capability could appeal to some Soviet leaders as an effective means of dealing with this threat before it is too late.

Arguments against large-scale Soviet military actions include:

— The very large manpower and materiel requirements for launching and sustaining major ground actions against the probable stubborn resistance of the Chinese and the uncertainties surrounding the outcome of a war which could very well become protracted and lead to the use of nuclear weapons.

— Soviet concern that, after a disarming nuclear strike, some Chinese missiles would survive and could destroy some Soviet cities in retaliation.

— Soviet concern over the political, economic, and strategic risks—some calculable and foreseeable and some not—which would attend any major military involvement with China.

Our judgment, based on weighing all these and other considerations, is that the chances of a premeditated large-scale Soviet attack on China—while certainly still such as to demand attention—are quite low, say on the order of 1 in 10. While Moscow is prepared to punish the Chinese at any point on the frontier where the Chinese might act forcibly to assert territorial claims, the main Soviet policy to counter China is centered on diplomatic efforts and on activities within the Communist movement. These efforts will not cause the USSR's "China problem" to go away, and military action, particularly a disarming nuclear strike, may continue to have a certain appeal to some Soviet leaders. But when considered in light of the calculable and incalculable risks of military action, arguments for a more measured course which holds open the possibility of some accommodation and even reconciliation over the longer term are far more likely to prevail within the top Soviet leadership.

Most participants in this Estimate feel that the judgment above applies to both a large-scale Soviet invasion and a disarming nuclear strike. While the latter course probably rates more serious consideration by Soviet planners, the chances still seem low that such a course would actually be approved and implemented. DIA, however, would differentiate between a large-scale invasion and a disarming strike, rating the likelihood of a disarming strike as markedly greater than that of an invasion.

A continuation of tensions at present levels would have the following implications for Sino-Soviet force postures:

— It appears that the Soviets are now close to being satisfied, in terms of peacetime requirements, with the number of divisions presently deployed in the vicinity of the border; filling out of these units and the addition of support units will continue. The effort to maintain these forces will not impinge significantly on forces opposite NATO or on the Soviet position in mutual force reduction talks.

— The Chinese have been improving their defenses against possible attack from the north, but not at the expense of maintaining a balanced capability to defend against attacks from all directions. With US forces withdrawing from Southeast Asia,

northern defenses may receive more preferential treatment, but no rapid shift in dispositions is likely except in the event of clear-cut Soviet preparations to invade, in part because of Chinese concern not to alarm the Soviets unduly.

— Soviet and Chinese perceptions of each other's capabilities are likely to remain basically realistic; perceptions of intentions are more likely to be colored by emotional factors, but not to the degree leading to gross miscalculations.

— During the 1970s, improvements in China's general purpose forces will do little to overcome the qualitative superiority of Soviet forces, and the USSR will also remain far ahead in the strategic balance. Nonetheless, Chinese force developments will have the effect of increasing the deterrent to Soviet military action.

An increase in tensions between the two powers would cause both sides to intensify their military preparations along the border. It would influence the Soviet negotiating position in the strategic arms limitation talks and might cause the USSR to develop and deploy large numbers of regional weapons systems. The Chinese would probably push the deployment of their regional deterrent more rapidly, improve air defenses, and establish underground shelters and defenses in even greater numbers.

In a situation of lessened tension it is possible that the USSR would reduce its forces along the border, though not to the levels existing before 1965. Much more likely would be the maintenance of the current forces at lower levels of readiness.

THE ESTIMATE

1. Whatever prospects it may once have had for long-term "fraternal comradeship," the Sino-Soviet relationship is now plainly one of adversaries. The key source of contention is no longer, as it was during the early 1960s, mainly a dispute over China's relationship with the Soviet Union and its proper role within the socialist community. The struggle has now expanded into a clash of conflicting national interests and ambitions, in which each side perceives its physical security as well as its international position to be threatened by the other.[2]

I. THE MILITARY BUILDUP

2. The most dramatic and convincing evidence of the deep distrust and hostility in the Sino-Soviet relationship is found in the military preparations, particularly on the Soviet side of the common border. Starting with some 13-14 divisions near the border and three more in the Siberian Military District in 1965, the Soviets now have deployed a total of 43 combat divisions in positions which indicate that they would be used in the early stages of any major conflict with China. Of these, some 38 divisions are stationed near the border. During the same period Soviet tactical air strength has grown from less than 200 aircraft to some 1,150 aircraft, including 500 fighters, 400 fighter-bombers, 50 light bombers, and 200 reconnaissance planes.[3]

3. It is clear that Soviet forces in the border region exceed by considerable measure that capability required to stop any attack the Chinese might mount, given the present capabilities and disposition of Chinese forces. But it does not follow automatically from this that the USSR harbors specific plans for unprovoked offensive actions. It has long been Soviet practice to over-insure against military threats, and Soviet defense programs have shown a frequent tendency to reflect less a systematic pursuit of narrowly-defined ob-

[2] For an extended discussion and analysis of the causes and implications of the Sino-Soviet conflict, see NIE 11-9-71, "Soviet Policy in Asia," dated 15 April 1971, ~~SECRET~~.

[3] See map, page 7.

jectives than a general quest for flexibility to provide a margin of security against uncertainties.

4. From the Soviet point of view in 1965, the uncertainties concerning future Chinese threats and other contingencies were many. Given the developing Soviet distrust of the Chinese, a rather large buildup was required simply to provide for the physical integrity of the lengthy frontier (over 6,800 miles, including the 2,650-mile Sino-Mongolian sector). More importantly, the narrowness of the band of habitable Soviet territory along the frontier and the proximity of the vital Trans-Siberian Railroad to the Manchurian border both required that the buildup be concentrated in areas close to the border so that the Soviets could stop a Chinese attack and push Chinese forces back before the railroad could be cut.

5. While the pace of the Soviet buildup was relatively fast—at peak levels, new divisions were being formed at a rate of six per year—nonetheless it appeared to reflect a long-range plan for methodical growth. While some experienced personnel and some air units were drawn from the western USSR, no ground force units opposite the NATO central region were used in the buildup. The net additional costs of the forces opposite China are estimated to have reached some seven percent of annual expenditures for all Soviet military forces by 1970.[4] These costs are by no means inconsequential, but we have not been able to identify any serious impact on the Soviet economy or on the Soviet forces opposite NATO resulting from this buildup.

6. Finally, it should be noted that Soviet deployment of new ground force divisions and air units appears to have tapered off. Fleshing out of the units in place continues, as does the buildup of support units. The forces in place clearly give the Soviets a potent offensive capability. Brought quickly to full strength through local mobilization, they might be able to occupy northern Sinkiang and penetrate into Manchuria. But it is the opinion of US military planners that their Soviet counterparts would not favor the initiation of large-scale military operations designed to seize and hold any significant slices of Chinese territory without first beginning a mobilization that would lead to the creation of a force of at least 80 divisions in Soviet Asia.

7. Although the Chinese became aware of the Soviet buildup shortly after it began, Peking made no effort to concentrate additional troops of its own close to the border. While the Chinese maintain some 1,400,000 of their 3,200,000 ground troops in the four military regions that border the USSR and Mongolia, most of these troops are deployed 300 to 500 miles from the closest border points. The deployment of air and air defense forces follows a similar pattern; China has 1,600 of its 3,900 tactical and air defense fighters deployed in the four northern military regions, but most of these are based well away from the border.

8. China's decision not to move its forces up to the border in the face of the Soviet threat can be explained in terms of the interaction of Chinese politics, Maoist military doctrine, Peking's view of the threats to

USSR

There are 43 Soviet combat divisions whose deployment indicates that they would be used in the early stages of any major conflict with China. Of these, some 38 divisions are stationed near the border. The other five divisions are located in the Siberian MD. The total strength of the entire force, including nondivisional units and headquarters, is estimated at 390,000, of which some 360,000 are located in the area near the border. In addition, there are 7 to 8 combat divisions and several nondivisional support units located in other parts of Soviet Asia which could be used to reinforce the border—a total force of some 46,000 men (27,000 in the Turkestan MD and 19,000 on Sakhalin Island and the Kamchatka Peninsula). The forces in the remote areas of the Far East MD, however, are not likely to be used in the event of hostilities with China because of Soviet concern with maintaining the defense of these areas. The forces in Turkestan, on the other hand, may be used against China in the absence of a threat from Afghanistan or Iran. The total number of air defense aircraft is about 450. There are also some 50,000-55,000 border guards in the immediate border area.

- Motorized rifle division
- Tank division
- Airborne division
- Airbase housing tactical or air defense units
- Helicopter unit
- Helicopter assault type regiment
- Scaleboard site

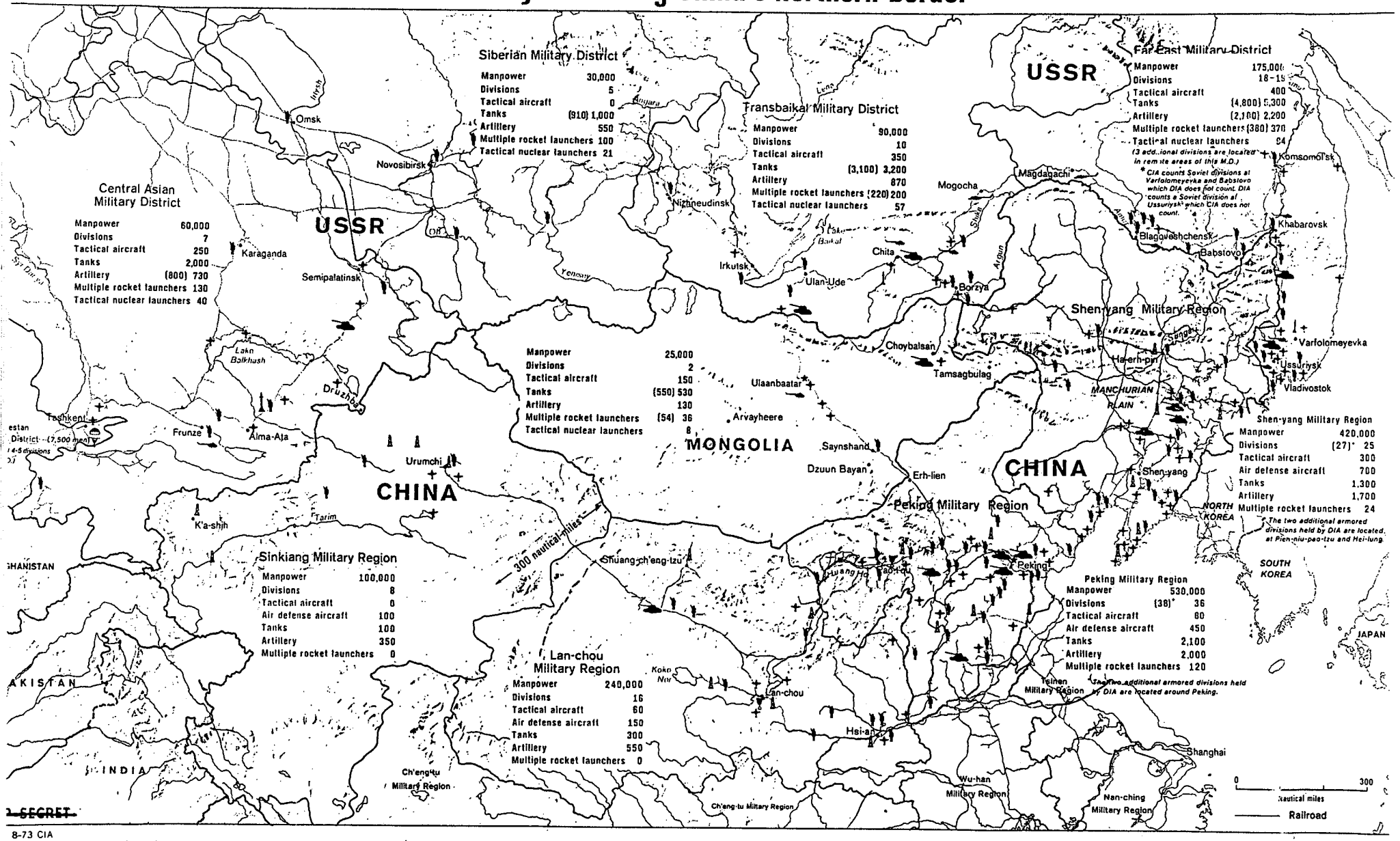
China

China has about 45 combat divisions, along with combat and service support units, within 300 nautical miles of the border. These forces total about 600,000 men. Within the four northern military regions there are about 42 other combat divisions, plus support units, which could be used as reinforcements.

- Infantry division
- Armor division
- Cavalry division
- Border defense/internal security division
- Airbase housing tactical or air defense units

All figures tabulated on the map are rounded to two significant digits except in cases where they were sufficiently small to make any variance significant. Manpower figures on both sides include only the ground forces, and exclude noncombat personnel such as those at maintenance and training installations as well as personnel in paramilitary armed formations such as the Chinese militia. Figures for Soviet equipment represent an estimate of the gross inventories of type in each MD and include equipment found in tactical air units, combat maneuver units, fortified area units, storage (exclusive of aircraft), army schools and border guard units. CIA and DIA have reached common estimates except as indicated by figures appearing in parentheses, which represent DIA estimates.

inese and Soviet Forces Available For Early Use Along China's Northern Border



SECRET

8-73 CIA

China, basic military capabilities, and the lack of defensible terrain near the border. During 1965-1968, Mao was intent on use of the PLA in the Cultural Revolution, and in fact, some Chinese units were moved southward out of Manchuria during that period for domestic security and political reasons. Peking was also concerned with the threat posed by US forces in Indochina. With characteristic Chinese Communist caution and taking account of China's relative military weaknesses—in both general purpose and strategic forces—Peking took care to offer no serious provocation to either adversary. Rather, the strategy with respect to the USSR was to hold forces well back from the border in order to avoid the danger of being cut off by the superior mobility and firepower of the Soviets and to maintain balanced dispositions protecting the vital centers of the country against all potential threats.

9. Even those measures taken by the Chinese which are clearly anti-Soviet, such as the construction of fortified areas and the priority deployment of early warning radars in northern border regions in 1970-1972, are clearly defensive, and do not involve a buildup of Chinese forces close to the border. China now seems less fearful than in 1969-1970 of an imminent Soviet attack, and there has been little change in the basic pattern of the deployment of its military forces.

10. The apparent increase in Chinese confidence has been due in part to diplomatic successes—entry into the UN, the achievement of a new image of respectability and responsibility in the West, and most importantly, its cordial relations with the US. In some measure this confidence also derives from progress in the deployment of strategic weapons. Even with the present limited numbers of operational MRBMs and IRBMs, China has the beginnings of a credible second-strike force.[5] The missiles are deployed in modes designed to make them hard to find and hard to hit[redacted]

11. These modest Chinese advances in strategic weapons have, of course, done nothing to alter the vast and growing strategic superiority of the USSR. The Soviets have stepped up strategic reconnaissance against China, built ballistic missile early warning radars oriented toward China, and enhanced their ICBM capabilities by deploying several hundred SS-11s so that China is in their target sectors.

II. THE LIKELIHOOD AND POSSIBLE FORMS OF MILITARY CONFLICT

12. In view of Soviet military superiority generally, as well as in the border area itself, it is extremely unlikely that China would take the initiative to attack Soviet forces or installations across the border. Even Chinese patrolling in the disputed border areas is likely to be relatively cautious because of the evident Soviet capacity and demonstrated willingness to respond at a more powerful level (as at Damanskiy Island in March 1969). The Chinese, having learned the virtues of restraint from their experiences along the border in 1969, seem likely to resist any temptation to test Moscow's patience and tolerance. In both domestic and foreign policies since that time the Chinese have shown that they take the Soviet threat seriously. They have adopted publicly the posture of a threatened state, and

[5] Some 50 MRBMs and IRBMs are now operational. Not all of these are within range of Soviet targets. Chinese missiles are not deployed to gain maximum coverage against the USSR. The pattern of deployment demonstrates concern to provide coverage all around the periphery of China.

while they have not changed their basic negotiating positions or territorial claims because of the Soviet threat, they have restrained their actions along the border.

13. Thus, if conflict were to develop, it would be more likely to result from a Soviet initiative. At the lower levels of possible conflict, Soviet action might be motivated by the simple desire to inflict local punishment and humiliation on Chinese border forces in response to Chinese patrolling in disputed territory. In this case, Soviet military action might be limited to heavy artillery barrages with no involvement of Soviet troops in Chinese territory. If the provocation were more serious, however, Soviet forces might cross the border to inflict reprisals and to demonstrate Soviet resolve. But the decision to do this would almost certainly be reserved to Moscow.

14. Military action of this sort certainly cannot be ruled out over the next few years, but Moscow has shown an interest in containing border tensions and would not wish to get embroiled in a drawn-out series of potentially explosive border exchanges that might lead to deeper involvement in a major conflict. Simply put, neither side has enough to gain by limited military initiatives along the border to justify the larger risks, including that of putting in jeopardy the momentum of their respective policies of detente and improved relations with the US.

15. Various motivations are conceivable for major Soviet military actions against China. In the highly improbable event that China continued border harassments in the face of local Soviet reprisals, the Soviets might move across the border in considerable strength in an effort to halt these provocations once and for all. Limited objective military operations in Manchuria and Sinkiang could be undertaken to exert pressure on the Chinese leadership. Deeper penetrations, involving mobilization of additional Soviet forces, would have the basic purpose of solving the more basic "China problem." An opportunity for such action might occur in the contingency of a China sharply divided by an internal struggle for power. In this case, the Soviets might intervene with the aim of supporting or imposing a faction more favorably disposed to cooperation with the USSR.

16. This and other possible pretexts for Soviet invasion [ ] are feasible from the military planners' point of view in terms of a high assurance of initial success.[6] But all raise a number of serious questions in terms of possible risks, snowballing commitments, broader implications, and end results. As the Soviets themselves have stressed, to start a war is easy, ending it is much more difficult.

---

[6] For example, Soviet forces now in place (but built up to full strength) could probably take northern Sinkiang and establish a holding position. In Manchuria they could probably advance about 200 miles before meeting strong opposition and establish holding positions in defensible terrain. But even in these relatively limited operations, it is likely that Soviet military planners [ ] would wish virtually to double the present force opposite China to some 80 divisions, about 70 of which would face northeastern China. Formation of a force of this size would require a substantial buildup of ground and air support opposite China. In addition, a significant portion of the combat and combat support capability would have to be mobilized and moved to the border area. Soviet military planners would probably calculate that they could reach as far as Peking with such a force, but they would undoubtedly require a much larger force to seize and hold Peking. This would involve the creation of new units through mobilization and would eventually result in some degradation of Soviet combat potential opposite NATO.

17. Whatever the circumstances of a Soviet invasion, Soviet political leaders would almost certainly expect Chinese resistance to develop and to be stubborn. They would have no assurance that the war could be brought to an end on their terms and that they would not get bogged down in a protracted and costly struggle. Moscow might foresee being confronted eventually with a choice between withdrawal or the use of nuclear weapons in an effort to force a decisive end to the conflict. The latter action, even if it were successful, could have many and far-reaching adverse repercussions for the USSR's position in the world.

18. The growing Chinese nuclear strike capability would be given foremost consideration in a Soviet decision to attack China. Indeed, it is probable that the Soviets have already considered a disarming nuclear strike against that growing capability—apart from any ground action—because it is the most dramatic and potentially effective military aspect of the Chinese challenge to the USSR as the dominant power in Asia. But the Soviets probably believe they could not now completely eliminate the threat of a Chinese second strike against Soviet Asian population centers, particularly from missile launchers they may not have located, and their apprehensions would incline them toward worst-case assumptions. Consequently, they now face the prospect that several of China's missiles could destroy military targets or cities in Soviet Asia even after a Soviet first strike.

19. The Soviet leadership could, of course, simply disregard the possibility of Chinese retaliation and proceed with a disarming nuclear attack on the assumption that the Chinese would follow the rational course and refrain from retaliating with their few remaining missiles—an act of pure vengeance which would only guarantee that they would sustain even greater damage in retribution. The Soviets could scarcely count on such Chinese restraint, however, and would be unlikely to jeopardize some of their major cities unless they came to believe that inaction carried greater risks than proceeding with the attack. To date the manifold uncertainties and risks in any military action against China have clearly outweighed any possible advantages, and the growth of the Chinese deterrent will continue to increase the risks.

20. The military risks are not the only considerations which deter a major Soviet attack on China, whether by nuclear strike or on the ground. Choice of the military course obviously would intensify and solidify Chinese hostility for years to come; it would greatly lessen whatever chance may exist for reconciliation with a new generation of Chinese leaders. Moscow's general policy of detente with the West, and most importantly its effort to foster economic ties, especially with advanced Western countries, would also be imperiled. The Soviet attempt to portray the USSR as a force for peace and a protector of the poor, the weak, and the non-white would be undermined, especially in the Third World. So long as the Soviets were militarily involved with China, they would be concerned about possible ways that other powers, especially the US, might seek to take advantage of their reduced influence in other areas of the world. They would also have to consider the likelihood that the US would perceive a new aggressiveness or instability in Soviet policy and alter its policies toward the USSR, perhaps even taking steps to improve its strategic weapons program. In addition, the Soviets would surely be concerned that their first use of nuclear weapons, even if militarily successful, might fundamentally alter world opinion against the USSR.

21. These political, strategic, and military considerations, when taken together, argue strongly against a premeditated large-scale Soviet attack on China. While Moscow is prepared to punish the Chinese at any point on the frontier where the Chinese might act forcibly to assert territorial claims, the main Soviet policy to counter China is centered on diplomatic efforts and on activities within the Communist movement. These efforts will not cause the USSR's "China problem" to go away, and military action, particularly a disarming nuclear strike, may continue to have a certain appeal to some Soviet leaders. But when considered in light of the calculable and incalculable risks of military action, the arguments for a more measured course which holds open the possibility of some accommodation and even reconciliation over the longer term are far more likely to prevail within the top Soviet leadership. Thus, while the possibility of large-scale conflict will continue to exist, the chances of such a conflict appear to be quite low, say on the order of 1 in 10. Most participants in this Estimate feel that this judgment applies to both a large-scale Soviet invasion and a disarming nuclear strike. While the latter course probably rates more serious consideration by Soviet planners, the chances still seem low that such a course would actually be approved and implemented. DIA, however, would differentiate between a large-scale invasion and a disarming strike, rating the likelihood of a disarming strike as markedly greater than that of an invasion.

III. FUTURE FORCE RELATIONSHIPS

22. Just as the prospective general relationship between the USSR and China is one of continuing confrontation and contest, but with no major military conflict, so the prospective force relationship is one in which each side maintains its forces opposite the other, but at a level which does not disrupt or distort its total military commitments. Planned Soviet divisional deployments along the Sino-Soviet border appear to be close to being realized; there is thus little prospect that future border requirements will impinge noticeably on force requirements in Europe and mutual force reduction talks. The continued buildup of support forces will also be undertaken with little effect on forces opposite NATO.

23. To the present time, the guiding strategy of the Chinese military leadership has been to maintain China's capability to defend against attacks from all directions, and not to give preferential treatment to defense against possible attack from the north to the detriment of China's defense posture elsewhere. Now that US forces are withdrawing from Southeast Asia, it is possible that the issue will again arise as to whether the limited Chinese forces and resources should be concentrated to a greater degree against the USSR. To date, however, there is no evidence that a basic reorientation of Chinese forces is under way, and any rapid large-scale shift seems unlikely, in part because of Chinese concern not to alarm the Soviets unduly. China's likely course is to continue the construction of strong defensive positions well back from the border while proceeding with its longstanding programs to modernize its armed forces.

24. It is, of course, possible that if Sino-Soviet tensions grow in the future, both sides will intensify their military preparations. If the Soviets intend to develop a force along the border designed for major ground actions against China, they would probably begin by setting up a structure for a five-*front* force and possibly a theater headquarters. A Chinese reaction to increased tension and evidence of a further Soviet buildup would probably take the form of an increased effort

to strengthen its northern defenses. Chinese ground forces, if they were to be prepared to undertake offensive operations away from their bases, would need enlarged logistics support and additional ground support aircraft. Although Chinese forces will improve over the next few years, there is little chance that the improvement would be so great as to support a capability to undertake major operations against the USSR.

25. Heightened tension would also have an influence on the strategic weapons postures of the two powers. It might cause the USSR to be more reluctant to sign an offensive arms agreement with the US; it would certainly make the USSR more determined to negotiate an agreement that would permit it to keep what it regarded as an adequate deterrent against both China and the US.[7] In the event of a US-Soviet agreement limiting ICBMs and intercontinental bombers, the Soviets might feel the need to develop and deploy larger numbers of regional weapon systems to cope with the still growing Chinese strategic capability, using resources freed by the US-Soviet agreement to do this. As for the Chinese, heightened tensions would probably cause them, among other things, to push the deployment of their regional deterrent more rapidly, to improve air defenses against attack from the north and west, and to establish underground shelters and defenses in even greater numbers. China's limited technological capabilities and high development costs appear to preclude a successful effort to develop an ABM in the next decade, although ballistic missile early warning radars would probably be deployed.

[7] The effect of the growing Chinese missile deployments in the 1970s on Soviet conceptions of "sufficiency" requires continuing analysis of a complex mix of factors. No new and useful findings are available for treatment in this paper.

26. In a situation of lessened tension, it is possible that the USSR would reduce its forces along the border, though probably not to the levels existing before 1965. But even in a condition of general detente, the maintenance of current force levels at lower levels of readiness would be more likely than any substantial reductions in those force levels. The Soviets, having made a substantial investment in equipment and facilities in Soviet Asia, would probably be inclined to allow unit personnel strength levels to decline, rather than to close bases and remove equipment.

27. Assuming neither greatly heightened nor greatly lessened tension, the anticipated gradual growth in the firepower and mobility of China's general purpose forces will do little to overcome Soviet superiority within the next few years. Nonetheless, these improvements will tend to increase the deterrent capability of Chinese forces in Soviet eyes.

28. During the period of the 1970s, the Soviet Union will also remain far ahead of China in the strategic balance. Soviet strategic attack forces are growing in flexibility and capability against China. The new Backfire bomber will be able to cover all of China unrefueled from Far East bases, an option not open to the Badger. The new multiple-warhead SS-11 Mod-3, which is probably being retrofitted to silos in Soviet Asia, will have a much broader target sector than the older SS-11, and will probably thus include China in its target sector, whereas many older SS-11s did not. Finally, the SS-N-8 will be able to target all of China from D-class home ports, an option not open to older Soviet ballistic missile submarines.

29. These increases in Soviet weapons will add to an already overwhelming strategic ca-

pability, but will not make for any appreciable change in the balance. Our projections of Chinese missile forces, however, indicate that China will be able in the late 1970s to target several hundred Soviet targets. Soviet projections almost certainly "worst case" this development. Relatively speaking, therefore, the small growth in the Chinese retaliatory capability will carry more significance in the strategic relationship between the two countries than the more extensive Soviet growth.

30. Force developments on the border and in the strategic forces thus indicate that the optimal time has passed for the Soviets to use military force to disarm China or to coerce Peking, and that likely future Chinese force developments will further reduce Soviet military options vis-à-vis China.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

DISSEMINATION NOTICE

1. This document was disseminated by the Central Intelligence Agency. This copy is for the information and use of the recipient and of persons under his jurisdiction on a need-to-know basis. Additional essential dissemination may be authorized by the following officials within their respective departments:

a. Director of Intelligence and Research, for the Department of State
b. Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, for the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
c. Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army, for the Department of the Army
d. Director of Naval Intelligence, for the Department of the Navy
e. Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, for the Department of the Air Force
f. Assistant General Manager for National Security, for the Atomic Energy Commission
g. Assistant Director, FBI, for the Federal Bureau of Investigation
h. Director of NSA, for the National Security Agency
i. Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury, for the Department of the Treasury
j. Director of National Estimates, CIA, for any other Department or Agency

2. This document may be retained, or destroyed by burning in accordance with applicable security regulations, or returned to the Central Intelligence Agency by arrangement with the Office of National Estimates, CIA.

3. When this document is disseminated overseas, the overseas recipients may retain it for a period not in excess of one year. At the end of this period the document should either be destroyed, returned to the forwarding agency, or permission should be requested of the forwarding agency to retain it in accordance with IAC-D-69/2, 22 June 1953.

4. The title of this document when used separately from the text should be classified: ~~SECRET~~

[redacted]